



City of Seattle

Department of Planning and Development
Diane M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3012187
Applicant Name: Terry Plumb
Address of Proposal: 701 S Dearborn Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a 20,529 sq. ft. structure (maintenance facility for the First Hill Streetcar) and a 48,550 sq. ft. two-level parking structure. Determination of Non-Significance was prepared by the Seattle Department of Transportation.

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) requires the following approvals:

SEPA – For Conditioning Only - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION:

Environmental documents issued by Seattle Department of Transportation. The mitigated Determination of Non-Significance (MDNS) was published on October 4, 2010.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site Location and Zoning Designations

The project site is located east of 7th Avenue S and south of S Dearborn Street, at the southern edge of the International District. The northern portion of the project site is located in the IDM 150/85-150 zone (International District Mixed 150 Residential/Incentive Height 85-150). The southern portion of the project is within the IC 85-160 zone (Industrial Commercial). The site is part of the Charles Street Maintenance Yard owned and operated by the City of Seattle.

Vicinity Description

North of and adjacent to Dearborn Street, parcels are zoned International District Mixed, with a mix of commercial and residential uses. To the south, parcels primarily are zoned Industrial Commercial, with light industrial and commercial uses predominating.

Proposal Description

The proposed project involves construction of a 20,529 sq. ft. structure for maintenance and storage of the First Hill Streetcar, to be built and operated by the City of Seattle. The proposal would include a yard for secure storage of eight streetcars. The maintenance facility would share the site with other City vehicle storage, maintenance, inspection, and dispatch uses. To avoid displacement of these uses, the project will include construction of a new 48,550 sq ft parking structure to the south.

Public Comments

The SEPA comment period for this project ended on December 14, 2011; no comment letters were received.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant and dated September 29, 2010, and annotated by this Department. The information in the checklist, supplemental information provided by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states in part: "where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation" (subject to some limitations). Under certain limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is considered appropriate, and is provided below.

Short-term (construction-related) Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from construction activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code regulates site excavation for foundation purposes and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the City.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (AMD 25.05.675 B) allow the reviewing agency to mitigate impacts associated with construction activities. Most short-term impacts are expected to be minor, and compliance with the applicable codes and ordinances mentioned above will reduce or eliminate the adverse short-term impacts to the environment. No conditioning is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

Long-term (operational) Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are anticipated from this proposal. These impacts include increased surface water runoff from greater site coverage by impervious surfaces; increased bulk and scale on the site; increased demand on public services and utilities; increased traffic in the vicinity of the project; impacts to air from vehicle exhaust; increased light and glare; and increased noise. The appearance and aesthetic impacts of the maintenance building will be addressed through review by the International Special Review District. None of these impacts are expected to be substantial and will, in part, be mitigated by the City's adopted codes and/or ordinances, including the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (stormwater runoff from additional site coverage by impervious surfaces) and the Noise Ordinance (noise).

Light and Glare

The maintenance facility will have exterior lighting for security as well as operation of the facility up to 24 hours a day. Such exterior lighting would be installed outside of all building doors, supply receiving areas, outside work areas, and site entrances. This lighting could impact neighboring properties and rights-of-way. To reduce such impacts, all exterior lighting will be directed down and will use directional shields to minimize off-site light and glare. No additional mitigation is required pursuant to SEPA policies (SMC 25.05.675 K).

Transportation

Traffic volumes at the site will increase due to trips made by supervisory, operations, administrative, and maintenance staff at the maintenance facility. Approximately 15 staff are expected to work at the facility, and are estimated to generate approximately 30 vehicle trips per day. As the facility will operate up to 24 hours a day, employee trips will be spread out throughout the day, and typically will result in an unnoticeable increase in traffic volumes in the vicinity of the project. A small number of additional vehicle trips will result from streetcar vehicles entering and exiting the maintenance site. These trips will occur within the vacated 8th Avenue S right-of-way on the east side of the site. These trips are expected to be infrequent and distributed throughout the day. Impacts from the small increases in vehicle trips due to the project will be minor, and no mitigation is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies (SMC 25.05.675 R).

CONDITIONS - SEPA

None.

Signature: (signature on file)
John Shaw, Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: March 1, 2012